DAWN

METRO South

KARACHI Wednesday, January 14, 2026

KARACHI

Sunset	06:03pm
Sunrise (Tomorrow)	07:17am

NEXT 24 HRS

Minimum	13°C
Maximum	25°C
Humidity	40%
Outlook	Sunny

Roma takes Dakar lead as Ford goes one-two

Pg.18 SPORT

Police get remand of labour activist in extortion case

By Sumair Abdullah

KARACHI: Around a week after what his family and friends called his enforced disappearance, police produced trade unionist Iqbal Abro before an anti-terrorism court (ATC) and got his three-day remand in an extortion and terrorism case.

Abro, who went missing on Jan 9, was booked by the Awami Colony police in a case registered on the complaint of the security in-charge of Towellers Limited, a factory in Landhi, under Sections 384 (extortion), 385 (putting a person in fear of injury in order to commit extortion), 386 (extortion by putting a person in fear of death or grievous hurt), 506-B (criminal intimidation) and 34 (common intention) of the Pakistan Penal Code, read with Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

On Tuesday, the investigating officer (IO) brought Abro and another person before the administrative judge of the ATCs, who remanded them in police custody for three days.

The complainant alleged in the FIR that the factory management had terminated the services of an employee, Shehzad, for misconduct under labour laws. He claimed that on the morning of Jan 9, Shehzad arrived at the factory along with Abro and other suspects, threatened the management and allegedly warned that the factory would be set on fire if extortion money, allegedly paid earlier, was not given again.

The complainant further claimed that the suspects also threatened to block entry into the factory and issued death threats.

Labour leader Nasir Mansoor told *Dawn* that Abro had been implicated in a "fabricated and malicious" case. He said that a petition was already filed before the Sindh High Court over Abro's enforced disappearance.

WATER bowsers are filled at a hydrant. Media reports say Mayor Murtaza Wahab, being the chairman of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation, has directed the utility to end water supply through tankers and to develop a system that provides piped water to residents. It was also reported that a decision has been made to gradually shut down all seven hydrants operating in the metropolis. However, *Dawn* contacted KMC and KWSC media officials but these reports could not be independently verified.—PPI

Cabinet forms body to review plan to deregulate sugar sector

• CM Murad stresses need for phased transition, says safeguards essential to manage price volatility • Meeting decides to engage law firm to scrutinise ToRs of 11th NFC • Rs1.2bn approved for provincial intelligence and counterterrorism centre

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: The Sindh cabinet on Tuesday formed a ministerial committee to review the federal government's plan with regard to full deregulation of the country's sugar sector.

The meeting, presided over by Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah at the CM House, asked the committee to submit its detailed recommendations at the next meeting of the cabinet.

According to a press statement, the cabinet was briefed on the federal government's plan to fully deregulate the country's sugar sector by 2026.

The meeting was informed that Sindh contributes 26 per cent of national sugar cane production with 38 sugar mills across 16 districts.

The meeting stressed the need for a phased transition.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief minister directed that farmers' interests must be protected through third-party weighing, transparent payment timelines and advance notification of banned low-yield cane varieties.

Efficiency cannot come at the cost of growers, he said, adding that safeguards were essential to manage price volatility during the transition.

Approving a set of financial, administrative and policy decisions, the cabinet also decided to engage an independent legal firm to review the terms of reference (ToRs) of the 11th National Finance Commission.

Climate change fund

The cabinet also approved the establishment of the Sindh Climate Change Fund and the Sindh Climate Change Board.

The fund will be financed primarily through a 12pc corresponding adjustment fee on net revenue from carbon credit sales.

The chief minister said Sindh would not compromise on its constitutional and financial rights, firmly rejecting any policy that allowed redistribution of the provinces' unutilised climate funds.

"Sindh will safeguard its share and ensure climate financing directly benefits vulnerable communities," he asserted.

On internal security, the cabinet approved Rs1.24 billion for the operationalisation of the Provincial Intelligence Fusion & Threat Assessment Centre (PIFTAC) — an arm of the National Intelligence Fusion & Threat Assessment Centre.

The package includes funding for equipment, staffing, maintenance and vehicles. However, the cabinet directed that procurement of vehicles be placed before the Cabinet Committee on Austerity Measures.

CM Shah was of the view that security institutions must be strengthened, but with financial discipline and justification for every expense.

Heritage conservation

For heritage conservation, the cabinet approved Rs109.5 million, 50pc of the total cost, for the preservation and restoration of St. Saviour's Church in Sukkur and St. Thomas Cathedral in Hyderabad, with the remaining funds to be provided in the next financial year.

"Sindh's heritage belongs to all communities and must be preserved with care and dignity," the chief minister said.

The cabinet also approved Rs30m for the Karachi Literature Festival and Rs100m for strengthening Sindh Archives, including

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Investigators find no clue about 'targeted killing' of pharma worker

By Imtiaz Ali

KARACHI: Police on Tuesday are struggling to find any clue regarding the suspected targeted killing of a female employee of a pharmaceutical firm in the Landhi area a day earlier.

Officials said that an investigation had been launched to ascertain the motive and identify the killer(s).

Asma Haroon, 45, was gunned down, while Sumaira Ismail, 22, was injured outside the factory, apparently by a lone attacker who escaped from the spot.

The police said both the deceased and the injured woman worked at the pharmaceutical facility. On the day of the shooting, as they came out of the factory, the gunman opened fire and fled.

Area SHO Qamar Abbasi on Tuesday said that the police had registered a murder case on the complaint of Mohammed Haroon, the husband of Asma.

According to the contents of the FIR, the complainant stated that he had been residing in a rented house in Future Colony, Landhi, for the last four to five months. He is a mechanic by profession, while his wife had been working at the pharmaceutical firm. He said an unknown suspect had killed his wife for some unknown reasons.

Another officer, Sardar Ali Khan, told *Dawn* that the complainant said he had no enmity with anyone. He had taken the coffin of his wife to their native place in Zhob, Balochistan, for burial.

Child among six hurt in celebratory firing

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Six persons, including a six-year-old child, were shot at and wounded in celebratory aerial firing during a wedding ceremony in Cattle Colony in the small hours of Tuesday morning, officials said.

The Sukhan police said that the victims — Arsalan, 30, Jamshed Ali, 10, Satram Lakho, 24, Fareed Iqbal, 20, Aman Badal, 6, and Faizan Ashraf, 32 — were injured during firing at the ceremony held on Road-7 near Gol Ground.

The injured were taken to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, where their condition was stated to be out of danger.

According to Malir SSP Abdul Khaliq Pirzada, a repeater gun was used in the firing, and most of the victims sustained pellet injuries on their feet.

He said a suspect, Bilal, was arrested on the spot.

In a separate incident, the New Karachi police claimed to have arrested a suspect who resorted to firing during a wedding ceremony at around 1:20am on Tuesday in Sector 11-D.

Central SSP Zeeshan Shafiq Siddiqi said the police had prevented a possible tragedy.

The suspect, Mohammed Faraz, was taken into custody, and an illegal 9mm pistol was seized from him.

Governor gives assent to Sindh Safe Cities Authority bill

Amended law allows govt to appoint a grade-19 official as DG of authority; IGP to chair executive committee

By Tahir Siddiqui

KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori has given his assent to the Sindh Safe Cities Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

A spokesman for the Governor House said that the amended law will help improve law and order and make surveillance system more effective.

Under the amended law, the provincial government will now appoint the inspector general of police (IGP) as chairman of the SSCA's executive committee, replacing the home secretary and placing the IGP in charge of decision-making and implementation.

The bill also allows a BS-19 officer to be appointed as the SSCA director general (DG), whereas the post was previously reserved for BS-20 officers. The amendment substitutes the requirement for a BS-20 officer with the eligibility of either a BS-19 or BS-20 officer for the position of DG.

It further opens the post of chief operating officer (COO), previously reserved for a BS-19 officer, to BS-18 officers, while revising the requirement for COO to eligibility for BS-19 or BS-20 officers.

The amended law also proposes replacing the "management committee" with "executive committee" to ensure enhanced oversight, including representation from the police, finance, information and home departments.

Under the amended structure, the nine-member SSCA executive committee comprises the IGP as chairman, along with the DG, COO, a representative each from the home, finance, information, and science and technology departments, the deputy commissioner and senior superintendent of police concerned, and the project director of the Safe City Project of the respective city or town.

Previously, the nine-member committee was headed by the home secretary and included the IGP, the relevant commissioner, local government secretary, head of police of the respective region or division, and representatives of the finance, information, science and technology, and excise and taxation departments, along with the COO.

The lost library of Lyari

Mulla Fazil Hall Library, which was once a lightning rod for avid readers who dwelt in these narrow lanes, is today a mere shadow of its former glory

By Hazaran Rahim Dad

KARACHI: My journey into higher education began in my coastal hometown of Pasni, passed through the sprawl of Karachi, and eventually settled in Lyari — a neighbourhood with its own rhythms and ruptures.

With life compressed into narrow lanes, between tangled wires, flags, and ageing buildings, a library is not a luxury in such places; it is a necessity.

For many, the only familiar name is the Mulla Fazil Hall Library. Established in the 1980s, it was known as the Lyari Textbook Library in its early days and became a homestay for students across the town, including myself.

Today, the main library building is undergoing construction and the facility has temporarily been relocated.

When it is open, access comes at a cost: mosquito-infested rooms where dengue and malaria are constant threats, dilapidated and broken toilets, and the air thick with dust.

This is a paradox at the heart of Lyari — a neighbourhood long known for its intellectual traditions and political consciousness, yet one that today has almost no functioning public library. The hunger for learning persists, but the spaces meant to sustain it have quietly disappeared.

Until a few years ago, Mulla Fazil Hall Library stood tall at Aath Chowk, where eight roads finally unite.

Today, it has been replaced by a 'mini civic centre'.

Imran Fakhir Baloch, a lecturer at the Abdullah Haroon College who also presided over the Lyari Literary Forum (LLF) recalled that the library was his group's home. At gatherings there, discussions and debates went on for hours, seamlessly flowing from literature to art, sociology, philosophy and more.

"They would bring their own books, meet after classes, and choose a topic to discuss. That's how it always was here — people gathering at the day's end," said Zahid Barakzai, another LLF member and a library regular.

So when news of the library's planned demolition spread, a shiver of concern ran through the area's avid readers, manifesting in the form of a protest. They had one clear demand: the books must be saved, and the library relocated. Subsequent discussions and meetings took place, but no one stepped up to offer space.

Eventually, Nasir Karim, the then and current chairman of Lyari Town, volunteered to "give space", all the while emphasising that he was not officially responsible for it. The "space" was a football house owned by him, located a few minutes from the original site of the library.

And then, on a hot summer afternoon, the day of demolition arrived.

At a short distance from the site stood Suzuki pickup trucks, but they weren't there for the books, but for the salvage iron.

The Mulla Fazil Library housed a total of 10,000 books, of which only 7,000 reached their new home. "During the shifting, so many books and shelves were lost," recalled Akbar Faiz, who was then in charge of libraries in Lyari.

At the football house, the books stayed untouched and unsorted for nearly six months. Rehman Baloch, a member of the Baloch Students Action Committee and another regular at the library, visited the Lyari town office countless times.

"Each time, we were told that the football house was being renovated for the library," he told Dawn.

But when the time for sorting finally arrived, not much had changed, contrary to what Rehman and his friends had been told for days and months.

The first time I visited the 'new' library — a pale shadow of what it used to be — was a few months back. It is slumped across the main road in Chakiwara, a restless

THE entrance of the temporary site of the library.-Photo by the writer

stretch where a bulk of the traffic from Lee Market rushes toward Shershah, and onward to Hub Chowki.

From inside, it feels small and dim. As I stepped in, three men greeted me at the entrance: a peon, a member of the football house, and a familiar face from the neighbourhood — all of them conversing at a volume otherwise reprimanded inside libraries.

I cleaned my chair before sitting; a spare handkerchief came in handy in wiping off the dust that covered the seat. The table greeted me with yet another layer to clear. A glance around showed scattered books, some out of shelves, some lying in corners — a telltale sign of the shelves lost during the relocation.

Finally, when I settled down to read and write, my feet itched incessantly. For the first few minutes, I tried to resist the temptation to scratch until I finally gave in.

Mosquito bites. Yet, I was adamant. But every few minutes, the noise from the football house

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